

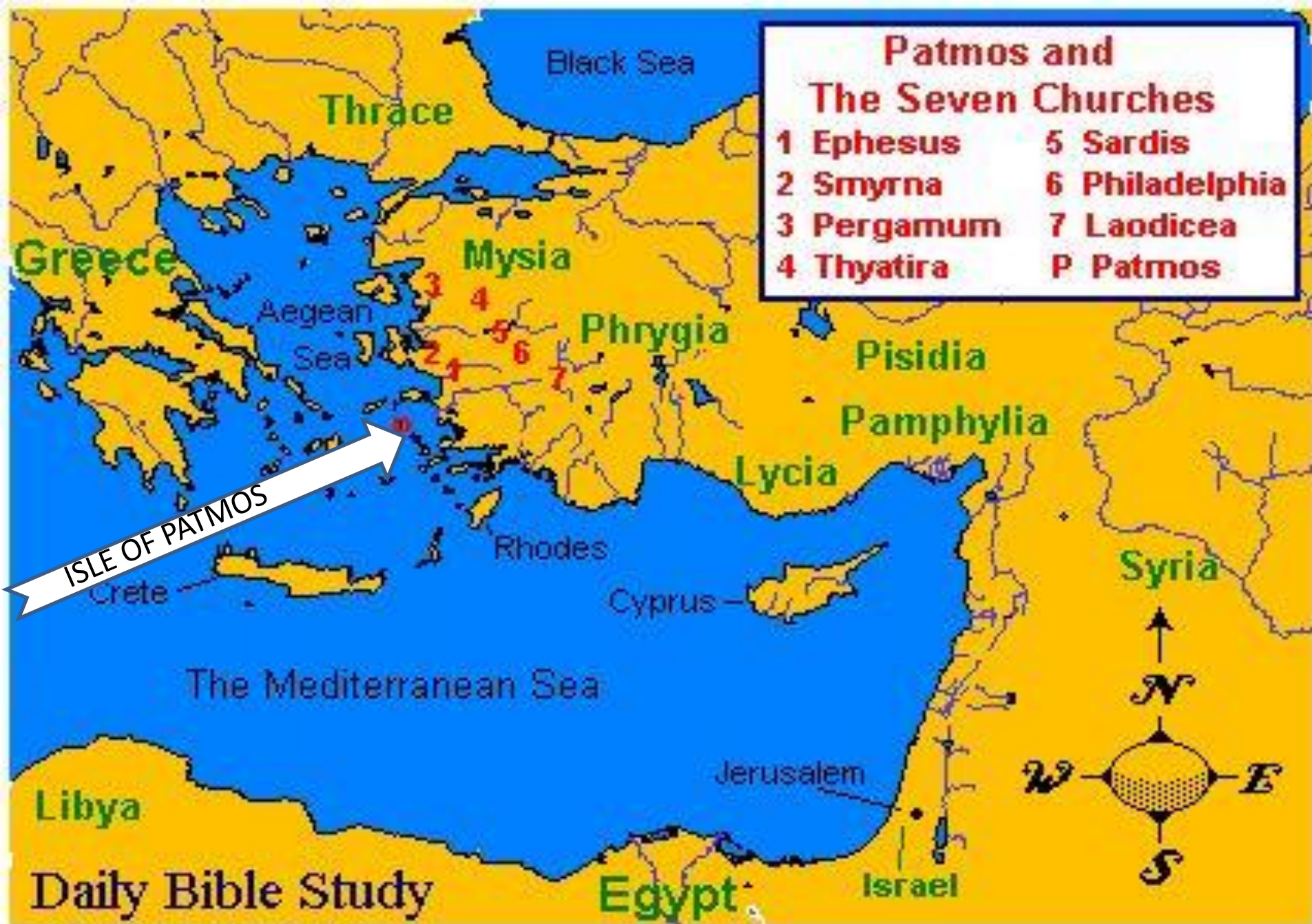
OVERVIEW OF REVELATION CHAPTERS 1, 2, AND 3



***BLESSED IS HE THAT READETH,
AND THEY THAT HEAR THE
WORDS OF THIS PROPHECY....***



**The fortress on Patmos
where John had his vision**



- ### Patmos and The Seven Churches
- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1 Ephesus | 5 Sardis |
| 2 Smyrna | 6 Philadelphia |
| 3 Pergamum | 7 Laodicea |
| 4 Thyatira | P Patmos |

ISLE OF PATMOS

Daily Bible Study

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Character of the Seven churches of Rev 2 and 3

Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) - the church that had forsaken its first love (2:4).

Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) - the church that would suffer persecution (2:10).

Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17) - the church that needed to repent (2:16).

Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) - the church that had a false prophetess (2:20).

Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6) - the church that had fallen asleep (3:2).

Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) - the church that had endured patiently (3:10).

Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) - the church with the lukewarm faith (3:16).

Seven self-styled addresses—In each letter our Lord utters something of himself, and what He says fits perfectly as the remedy to the condition of each church. For instance, **Ephesus** is a church which has lost its first love, so the Lord reveals himself as one who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks. **Smyrna** being a suffering church, to her the Lord manifests himself as the one who was dead and lives again so as to encourage them to be martyrs. **Pergamum** is a worldly church, hence the Lord unveils himself as the one with the sharp two-edged sword able to cut the world asunder.

Thyatira is a corrupted adulterous church, therefore the Lord appears with eyes as a flame of fire and feet like burnished brass in order to inspect and to judge. **Sardis** is a dead church, consequently the Lord shows himself forth as the one who has the Spirit of life (the seven Spirits of God) and the shining stars. **Philadelphia** is a church faithfully keeping the truth, and so the Lord proclaims himself as He who is holy and true and who opens wide to them the door of labor. **Laodicea** is a church full of human opinions, and for this reason the Lord discloses that He is the Head over all creation.

The progression of the letters until the coming of Christ.

1. **EPHESUS** -- "... or else I will come unto thee quickly ..." (Rev. 2:5).
2. **PERGAMOS** -- "... or else I will come unto thee quickly ..." (Rev. 2:16).
3. **SMYRNA** -- "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.
4. **THYATIRA** -- "... hold fast till I come" (Rev. 2:25).
5. **SARDIS** -- "... I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come ..." (Rev. 3:3).
6. **PHILADELPHIA** -- "... I come quickly ..." (Rev. 3:11).
7. **LAODICEA** -- "... I stand at the door, and knock ..." (Rev. 3:20).

City	Church Age	Date
Ephesus	Apostolic Church	A.D. 30-100
Smyrna	Persecuted Church	A.D. 100-313
Pergamos	State Church	A.D. 313-590
Thyatira	Papal Church	A.D. 590-1517
Sardis	Reformed Church	A.D. 1517-1790
Philadelphia	Missionary Church	A.D. 1730-1900
Laodicea	Apostate Church	A.D. 1900-----

Meaning of the seven localities—**Ephesus** means “desire” or “loosening”, which shows how they have left their first love. The word **Smyrna** comes from the word myrrh, which means “bitter”, thus signifying that period when the church suffered under the Roman persecutions. **Pergamum** signifies “high tower”, thus representing the church with worldly power and position after the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great accepted Christianity. **Thyatira** denotes “sacrificing untiringly”, which description fits well the period of the rise of the Catholic system with the instigation of the special priesthood and of idol-worship.

This may be considered the darkest and most corrupted age of the church. As to its meaning, *Sardis* connotes “revival” or “restoration”—a development which happened at the time of the Reformation, with nonetheless its spiritual condition still weak or dead. *Philadelphia* speaks of “brotherly love”, which had its exemplification over a hundred years ago* when there was such a recovery of the church that some Christians left all sects behind, joined together in love, and kept faithfully the truths in the Bible. *Laodicea* suggests “people’s opinions”, and how this applies appropriately to the condition of the church today that is so full of men’s opinions, and no respect for the Word of God.

Seven “I know”s—

Each letter includes the words “I know”. The Lord knows our conduct, whether good or bad. He does His best to commend the good, but He also severely reprimands the bad. This is the token of the righteous judgment of the Lord.

Seven exhortations—

Each church has its own peculiar situation, and the Lord exhorts each of them accordingly. His words of exhortation to the various churches are recorded in Revelation 2 and 3 as follows: to Ephesus (2.4,5), to Smyrna (2.10), to Pergamum (2.14-16), to Thyatira (2.20-25), to Sardis (3.2,3), to Philadelphia (3.11), and to Laodicea (3.17-20).

Seven promises—

The Lord raises up overcomers in each church for the purpose of maintaining His testimony. To them He gives special promises. These promises are given in 2.7, 2.10-11, 2.17, 2.26-28, 3.5, 3.12, and 3.21.

Seven calls—Each letter contains the words “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches” (2.7, 2.11, 2.29, 3.6, 3.13, and 3.22). Since these seven letters are dictated by the Lord himself, why does the record read that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks to the churches? In spite of the fact that the Lord speaks directly to John, the churches can only read what John has written. So that in the reading of them, there must be the enlightening of the Holy Spirit in order to understand. Furthermore, even when the Lord was on earth, He never spoke by himself but always spoke by the Holy Spirit. Today He still speaks by the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, it is the same as the Holy Spirit speaking to the churches.

Age	Period A.D.	Years	Church Age Name	Information	Church in Rev.
1	33-100	67	Apostolic	This was the period that the apostles were alive, beginning with the Day of Pentecost and ending with the death of the apostle John near the end of the first century.	Ephesus
2	100-312	212	Caesars	Persecution in the Colosseum occurred after A.D. 82, and the Diaspora from Rome began in A.D. 135 and continued till the Empire split into West and East around 300.	Smyrna
3	312-590	278	Constantine	Around A.D. 400 the Western Roman Empire began to decline. Byzantine period arose.	Pergamos
4	590-1517	927	Middle (Dark) Ages	The Old Roman Empire collapsed around A.D. 476. The Dark Ages loomed A.D. 476-1453. The Roman Catholic Empire and the Eastern Orthodox (Ottoman) Empire progressed in the <u>Crusades of A.D. 1096-1291</u> . Gothic styles prevailed. The Plague of the Black Death occurred.	Thyatira
5	1517-1750	233	Reformation	A European renaissance (rebirth or revival) ensued from A.D. 1300-1750. Protestantism began in 1500.	Sardis
6	1750-1925	175	Missionary	Industrial Revolution, Spiritualism, World War I, Communism began in Russia.	Philadelphia
7	1925- to the Tribulation and Apostate world	69 to date circa 1995	Apostate	Apostate Church Age as the Restoration Movement, Ecumenical Council, Federal Council of Churches, World Council of Churches developed. World War II began. Diaspora ended in 1948.	Laodicea